

Art Unit: 3643

causing an intestine pushing member to push and advance the shirred portion toward an intestine receiving member;

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pinching the shirred portion by and between said intestine pushing member and said intestine receiving member;

detecting that said intestine pushing member has reached a predetermined position;

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transporting, while constricting, the natural intestine casing stuffed with a material, ~~by~~ transporting means having a pair of wrapping connectors with constricting members fixed thereto at predetermined intervals;

pulling and moving the natural intestine casing on said stuffing tube by the transporting for a predetermined time after the detection, said stuffing tube having a distal end projecting from said intestine receiving member up to a position exceeding a common tangential line of a pair of locus circle depicted by said pair of constricting members; and

stopping the discharging of the material into the natural intestine casing after the lapse of a predetermined time.

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3. (Amended) The method for manufacturing natural intestine sausages according to claim 1, wherein said intestine pushing member moves toward said intestine receiving member by receiving air blown out into the atmosphere from an air nozzle provided in air blowing means.

4. (Amended) An apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages including a stuffing tube having a distal end and adapted to stuff a material into a natural intestine casing having a rear end portion, material

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Art Unit: 3643

supplying means for supplying the material into said stuffing tube, and transporting means having a pair of wrapping connectors disposed forwardly of said distal end of said stuffing tube and adapted to transport the natural intestine casing stuffed with the material, in a direction away from said distal end, said apparatus comprising:

A4 an intestine pushing member for pushing said rear end portion of the natural intestine casing on said stuffing tube;

an intestine receiving member having a hole portion through which said distal end of said stuffing tube is passed so that said distal end is located in such a manner as to project on a transporting-means side, said intestine receiving member being adapted to receive the natural intestine casing being pushed by said intestine pushing member;

intestine-pushing-member driving means for pushing and advancing said intestine pushing member toward said distal end of said stuffing tube so that a distance from said intestine pushing member to said intestine receiving member is reduced;

detecting means for detecting a position of said intestine pushing member and generating a detection signal; and

controlling means for stopping the operation of said material supplying means in response to the detection signal.

A5 14. (Amended) The apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages according to claim 13, wherein said intestine-pushing-member driving means has air blowing means for blowing air onto said intestine pushing member.

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Art Unit: 3643

13

8. (Amended) An apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages including a stuffing tube having a distal end and adapted to stuff a material into a natural intestine casing, material supplying means for supplying the material into said stuffing tube, and transporting means disposed forwardly of said distal end of said stuffing tube and adapted to transport the natural intestine casing stuffed with the material, in a direction away from said distal end, said apparatus comprising:

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an intestine pushing member for pushing a rear end portion of the natural intestine casing on said stuffing tube;

intestine-pushing-member driving means for pushing and advancing said intestine pushing member toward said distal end of said stuffing tube;

an intestine receiving member having a hole portion through which said distal end of said stuffing tube is passed so that said distal end is located in such a manner as to project on a transporting-means side, said intestine receiving member being adapted to receive the natural intestine casing being pushed by said intestine pushing member;

detecting means for detecting a position of said intestine pushing member and generating a detection signal; and

controlling means for stopping the operation of said material supplying means in response to the detection signal, wherein said transporting means has a pair of wrapping connectors to which constricting members for constricting the natural intestine casing stuffed with the material, are fixed at predetermined intervals, and each of said pair of wrapping connectors has a shaft, a locus

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Art Unit: 3643

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circle depicted by a tip of each of said constricting members which respectively move about said shaft, and a common tangential line which is tangential to the pair of locus circles of said pair of wrapping connectors, and wherein said stuffing tube is disposed such that said distal end thereof is located between the tangential line and said shaft.--

Please add claims 13-17 as follows:

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11 ~~12~~ The apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages according to claim 4, wherein said intestine-pushing-member driving means is provided with air blowing means having an air nozzle for directly blowing onto said intestine pushing member air for reducing said distance from said intestine pushing member to said intestine receiving member, and said air nozzle is located at a position opposing said intestine receiving member with respect to said intestine pushing member.

15 ~~14~~ The apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages according to claim ~~4~~¹³, wherein said intestine-pushing-member driving means comprises air blowing means having an air nozzle for directly blowing onto said intestine pushing member air for reducing said distance from said intestine pushing member to said intestine receiving member, and said air nozzle is located at a position opposing said intestine receiving member with respect to said intestine pushing member.

~~16~~¹² The apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages according to claim 4, wherein said intestine pushing member has a hollow cylindrical member formed of a resin, and a metallic annular member is fitted around an outer periphery of said hollow cylindrical member, and wherein said detecting means has a proximity switch.

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Art Unit: 3643

16. The apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages according to claim ¹³ 8, wherein said intestine pushing member has a hollow cylindrical member formed of a resin, and a metallic annular member is fitted around an outer periphery of said hollow cylindrical member, and wherein said detecting means has a proximity switch.

17. An apparatus for manufacturing natural intestine sausages including a stuffing tube having a distal end and adapted to stuff a material into a natural intestine casing, material supplying means for supplying the material into said stuffing tube, and transporting means having a pair of wrapping connectors disposed forwardly of said distal end of said stuffing tube and adapted to transport the natural intestine casing stuffed with the material, in a direction away from said distal end, said apparatus comprising:

an intestine pushing member for pushing said rear end portion of the natural intestine casing on said stuffing tube, said intestine pushing member having a hollow cylindrical member formed of a resin, a metallic annular member being fitted around an outer periphery of said hollow cylindrical member;

intestine-pushing-member driving means for pushing and advancing said intestine pushing member toward said distal end of said stuffing tube;

an intestine receiving member having a hole portion through which said distal end of said stuffing tube is passed so that said distal end is located in such a manner as to project on a transporting-means side, said intestine receiving member being adapted to receive the natural intestine casing being pushed by said intestine pushing member;

2

Art Unit: 3643

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detecting means having a proximity switch so as to detect a position of said intestine pushing member and generate a detection signal; and

controlling means for stopping the operation of said material supplying means in response to the detection signal.

In the Abstract:

Please substitute the attached abstract for the one on file.

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